

III. Remarks

A. Status of the Application

Claims 25, 35 and 44 are amended in the present paper. Claims 11 – 24 and 34 are cancelled in the present paper. Prior to the present paper, claims 1 – 10 were cancelled. Thus, claims 25 – 33 and 35 – 44 are pending herein. Reconsideration of this application in light of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

B. Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action mailed March 14, 2006 stated that claims 34-35 and 43-44 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 25 has been amended herein to include the subject matter of claim 34, effectively placing claim 34 in independent form. Consequently, claim 35 has been amended to depend from claim 25 instead of claim 34 (now canceled).

As noted above, the current Office Action indicates claim 43 “would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.” Applicants respectfully submit that claim 43 is in independent form, and therefore no amendment is required to make claim 43 allowable. Claim 44 has been amended to depend from claim 43 instead of claim 34. Accordingly, amended claim 44 is dependent on an allowable claim.

For the foregoing reasons, it respectfully submitted that claims 25, 35, and 43-44 are now in condition for allowance.

C. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Heynecker and Walt

Claims 15-33 and 36-42 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,057,100 to Heynecker (“Heynecker”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,482,593 to Walt et al. (“Walt”). Insofar as it may be applied against the present claims, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

As noted above, claims 15-24 have been cancelled. Claim 25 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 34. Claims 26-33 and 36-42 depend directly or indirectly from claim 25. Since claim 25 is in condition for allowance for the

reasons noted above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 26-33 and 36-42 over Heynecker in view of Walt has been overcome and that such claims are in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

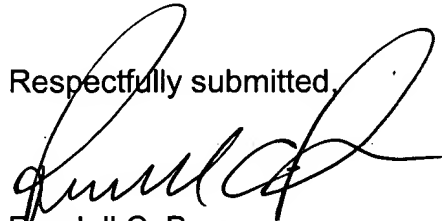
Claims 25 – 33 and 35 – 44 are now pending in the present application. In view of the foregoing remarks, allowance of claims 25 – 33 and 35 – 44 is respectfully requested.

The examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

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Respectfully submitted,



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